



**annual
report
2017**

CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

The Trust, founded in 1942, is a non-profit-distributing company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, No 377108. Registered as a charity, No 502132.

Founder:

The Very Revd Cyril A Alington, DD
Dean of Durham 1933-51

Patrons:

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The Very Revd Michael Sadgrove, MA
Sir William Whitfield, CBE, FRTPI, ARIBA

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J F Beard, BSc, DipLA, ALI
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R Cornwell, BSc (Chairman)
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B Ravelhofer, BA, PhD
M C Reed, CBE, MA, DPhil, FCILT, FCIHT, FRSA
(Treasurer)

Honorary Treasurer

M C Reed, CBE, DPhil
Normanlea
Albert Street
Durham City
DH1 4RL

Registered Office of the Trust:

Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Durham
DH1 1TH

Honorary Solicitors:

Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Durham
DH1 1TH

Honorary Secretary:

D C D Pocock, MA, PhD
c/o Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Durham
DH1 1TH

Examiners

Pullan Barnes
Chartered Accountants
49 Front Street
Framwellgate Moor
Durham
DH1 1TH

Bankers:

Co-operative Bank plc
21 High Street
Durham
DH1 3PL

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES, 2016-2017

Change is the one constant of historic cities. In Durham during the last twelve months change, both actual and pending, has been prominent.

COUNTY PLAN

Wide-ranging changes to be sought by the Authority have been in the pending file for longer than was expected, for its second attempt to produce an acceptable County Plan was expected by now to be approaching consultation on the third and final *Pre-Submission Preferred Draft*, ahead of an Examination in Public. However, we still await stage two, *Preferred Options*, which the Authority must carry out after consultation on the initial *Options and Issues* stage.

The reason for the delay was the announcement by central government in late autumn of a White Paper to be issued in early 2017. The Authority logically assumed that the Paper could seriously distort its own housing calculations. (A possible easing of Green Belt restrictions may also have been in its calculations.) In the event the White Paper, published in February, did not provide help on either aspect. A delayed revised timetable is therefore awaited.

The Trust's submitted comments, on forty issues, in the *Options and Issues* were summarised in *Bulletin* 81. The Plan's outline, disregarding the government inspector's interim report, was very much as before. A concentration on the city, necessarily at the expense of the rest of the county, remained the key to its strategy, with Aykley Heads the economic hub. Both northern and southern relief roads were retained, and encroachment on the city's Green Belt was envisaged in three of the four optional distributions of housing around the county. (The fourth was hardly a serious contender.)

UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The University Master Plan has been a permanent item on Trustees' agendas during the year. In summary, Trustees are disturbed at the scale of proposed development, a further 5700 students, as well as the premise on which it is based (expansion of departments to achieve world status), the down-grading of Stockton and the apparent neglect to incorporate seriously Ushaw College in the overall equation.) The consequence is that, to its detriment a small city will have to adjust even further to a continually expanding institution. (Enhanced economic benefit for the region cannot be gainsaid, but at the same time the city loses council tax revenue from some 2000 student-occupied houses, despite providing services.) When accomplished, will the University's last Chancellor still find Durham "the perfect little city"? Truly, the goose that has long been prized for laying the golden egg is turning out to be a cuckoo in the nest.

It is indeed feasible to accommodate its physical needs on the University's various parcels which constitute its estate, but so far movement about the city seems to have been ignored. Some narrow central streets were not designed to accommodate regular tsunamis of students; elsewhere the provision of pedestrian infrastructure is a crucial, but neglected, component of proposed development.

The latest consultation, for **Maiden Castle**, showed what may be described as large hangars of a size to incorporate four tennis courts, twelve badminton courts (and seating for 2000) and a full-size cricket pitch. Maiden Castle is, of course, Green Belt, and national planning policy allows exceptions for outdoor sports only on such designated land. Meanwhile, there appeared to be no proposal to thicken the tree screen along the A177 in order to preserve the green southern entry to the city. Trustees responded to the pre-application consultation accordingly.

REBUILDING IN CITY CENTRE

The heart of the city is currently blighted by three very large construction sites. On the Framwellgate bank of the river, astride Milburngate Bridge, upriver new metal framework for **The Gates** is already indicating how much more prominent than the former will be the finished result of a multiplex cinema surrounded by flats for 250 students. Downriver, the reinforced concrete of **Millburngate House** is yielding only slowly to the demolisher's attack. The successive revealing of the brutalist structure's different sections emphasises the sheer size of the building. A 'mixed development' is promised here.

In **Lower Claypath**, on land zoned for city centre use, a succession of properties has been flattened to make



The Gates arising, Millburngate House being demolished



Lower Claypath lowered

way for a huge privately-developed student accommodation block (PBSA), capacity 450 beds. The Claypath facade will rise to five storeys; at the rear the tallest part of the block will contain eight storeys.

Overall, the present score in the colonisation of the city by PBSAs is five built, eight building and two others with planning permission.

The **bus station** may be included here, since a planning application is said to be imminent. (The project was outlined in Bulletin 82.) Briefly, the motive - a new anchor store on the site - is highly questionable, the station itself will be shifted sideways, with only a single extra stand and highly inferior manoeuvrability. The architecture is contextually inappropriate and will damage key views. The replacement of the roundabout by traffic signals and a new road system will be grossly inadequate at peak times.

Unfortunately, pre-application consultation has been inadequate and misleading. To Trustees' surprise, the Authority alleged that the responses had been generally favourable. However, Trustees' analysis of the original 2014 responses, following a Freedom of Information request for the original data, came to a different conclusion to that of the Authority, which has since delayed a request to release the 2016 consultation responses.

ENVIRONMENTAL NOTES

The highlight of the year was the completion of the University's **Ogden Centre for Fundamental Physics**, designed by Daniel Libeskind. No building was more worthy of the Trust's Annual Architectural Award. Its angular, almost unpredictable form speaks of the exciting exploratory research by world-leading scientists within.

Modern work of an entirely different kind was the completion of the audacious conversion of some of the cathedral's claustral buildings to house the exhibition, **Open Treasure**. Doors opened in the summer; the climax, which all would expect, will arrive this summer when Cuthbert's coffin and artefacts will be revealed in the Great Kitchen.

Dunelm House, a dramatic University building of a previous era, found itself under threat, when its owners obtained a certificate of immunity from listing, which, if confirmed by the Secretary of State, would enable it to be demolished. Since the latter was as yet only "minded to approve", Trustees wrote in support of the 20th Century Society's request for a review of the decision. They find themselves in the company of Historic England and a host of architects and civic leaders.

Any building, but especially historic ones, needs an occupier to oversee its care. In this respect, both the former **fulling and corn mills** below the cathedral are currently vulnerable, with the archaeological museum having moved from the former and students no longer occupying the latter. Immediately on the downriver side of the old corn mill water began to seep from one of the many bands making up the geology of the bank onto the observation platform. The resultant slippery surface is thus now off-limits until the detailed geology is understood.

On the initiative of Durham's Business Improvement District body, **Millennium Place** received the centre's first 'digital totem', a fully interactive screen for the benefit of shoppers and visitors. Nearby, the paused cortege with St. Cuthbert's body takes no notice, still awaiting instructions from Palace Green.

The city is always well served by its parks and gardens department, here known as 'Clean and Green'. In 2016 the city was the 'Champion of champions' in Northumbria **in Bloom**, and therefore represented the region in Britain in Bloom, where another gold medal was won. No less pleasurable this spring were the glimpses of daffodils in a woodland setting on Castle Chare bank.



Castle Chare

INTERIM POLICY ON STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

The above policy came into force in September 2016 after much lobbying by the Trust. However, it took a government inspector, in an appeal decision, to point out to both the County Authority and Trustees that a property with more than 10% of student property within 100 metres radius could still be converted into a student household (HMO) if existing conversions made it impossible to achieve anything approaching a balanced community. Such was the case with 6 Waddington Street, where the last straw for the occupant was the approval of a student block on the site of the

former County Hospital. Trustees were perhaps over-optimistic in putting store towards a partial 'correction' in terms of the refusal of student accommodation for Kings Lodge, the recent completion of The Bowers residences and approval of flats in Ainsley Street. They were negligent in missing the small print permitting the exception described above. An apology is therefore offered to Jackie Levitas, who is in fact a life member of the Trust.

CATCHING UP AFTER 2009

The city has been without a voice since the creation of a unitary authority for the whole county. Now, at last, two projects of significance are near to hand. One is the creation of a **Parish Council** - a town council is deemed confusing for a city - to be formed of the electoral wards of Neville's Cross, Elvet and Gilesgate and part of Durham South. In February two-thirds of voters in the consultation were in favour of such a body. If the County Authority approves the result in June, then the Parish Council will be inaugurated in May 2018. A special significance is that it will be a statutory consultee on planning applications.

The other project concerns the creation of a **Neighbourhood Plan for Durham City**. A Neighbourhood Planning Forum (NPF), covering the same area as the parish council above, was approved by the County Authority in January 2014. Three Trustees are now Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary of the NPF. When complete, the Neighbourhood Plan will be a material document when planning applications are considered. While it cannot contradict higher level plans and frameworks, it can provide more detailed local policies consistent with the broader brush approach of the County Durham Plan and National Planning Policy Framework. Indeed, with the County Plan delayed, and the City of Durham Local Plan now 13 years old, once approved it will provide a robust and up-to-date set of policies for the historic core of the city and its western suburbs.

A completed proposed Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to three statutory consultees to check whether it should undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment to demonstrate that there would be no adverse environmental effects. Historic England, alone, decided that such an assessment was necessary. As a result, public consultation on the Plan has been delayed. At the time of writing it is not known when the consultation can take place. More information should be available by the time of the AGM, and will be given in the lecture following it (details below).

PERSONALIA

At last year's AGM **Mrs Janet Gill** and **Mrs Julie Hepple** retired after thirteen years as Trustees serving as our eyes in Elvet and Claypath. **Professor Barbara Ravelhofer** and **Mr John Ashby** were elected as new Trustees at the same meeting. In December **Mr John Lowe** was co-opted to the committee.

In March **Mr Michael Richardson** was awarded honorary life membership of the Trust for his work in amassing the invaluable Gilesgate Archive of pictures of past Durham, and for his willingness to share his findings. The latest example of the latter was his lecture at the Trust's spring open meeting. Our autumn lecture was given by **Mr Martin Roberts** in his second of what we hope will be a long line of annual lectures. The hope is founded on the ceaseless research conducted by an inquiring mind.

It is sad to record the death during the year of two distinguished former Trustees. **Major RJA Gazzard**, who died in December, obtained his rank from army service in Uganda, an experience which stood him well later in

his work in the Oman and Middle East in general. But it was in the North East that Roy became a colossus among architect-planners. His legacy can be seen in the New Towns of Peterlee and Killingworth, the growth of which he oversaw. During this time he edited the very successful journal, *The Northern Architect*. He was a frequent broadcaster, and appeared in a TV series of prominent persons in the North East. He was appointed as University lecturer in Geography in 1970, and served as a Trustee from 1969 to 1994, except for three years when he was seconded to the Department of Environment as Under Secretary. He took a key role in organising the Trust's 50th Jubilee Conference in October 1992. A recommendation of Roy's work is that he was an architect who elected to live in one of his own designs (Dunelm Court, South Street).



Colin Beswick



Roy Gazzard

Alderman Colin Beswick, MBE, who died in February, was a Durham man through and through. His whole life was devoted to public service, school teaching by day and a tireless worker in the community beyond the school gates. For forty years he served as councillor, first for the Municipal Borough and then for the City of Durham District in what now can be seen as the city's halcyon days. His was an effective voice and influential argument, especially on the city's planning committee, whether as chairman or not. When he retired his powerful voice was heard outside of the council chamber when for seven years took on the role of town crier - a position he revived. He was mayor in 1970-71. Although he was a Trustee for only four years, 1972-76, his interest and support never wavered. His love of place was summarised for all in a lecture he gave to the Trust in 2004.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM is the time for nominating and electing Trustees. We are currently operating below the number permitted in our Constitution, and would thus welcome new members. **Have you ever considered serving as a Trustee?** If interested, do please contact any of the thirteen members listed on the inside cover of the Report. Or, if you would like to get a flavour of what is involved, do remember that our monthly Trustees' meetings are open to members. (Always on the third Tuesday of the month, excepting December, in Alington House from 7pm.)

Lastly, members might like to consider bringing this Report on 10th May, since not only does it contain the agenda for the AGM, but it would be especially helpful should comments be made on the annual accounts.

After the AGM **Roger Cornwell**, who chairs both the Trust and the NPF, will give a public lecture, *The Durham City Neighbourhood Plan: A Progress Report*. In it he will set out the proposed policies, say what they are intended to achieve, and take questions and comments from those present.

D.C.D.P.

City of Durham Trust

Detailed statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Voluntary Income		
Subscriptions	3,440	2,712
Donations	1,988	5,300
Gift Aid Refunds	450	450
Total	<u>5,878</u>	<u>8,462</u>
Activities for Generating Funds		
Publication Sales		
<i>Bonomi</i>	6	2
<i>Visions</i>	-	3
<i>Durham in Paintings</i>	279	16
<i>Trust Awards</i>	5	-
<i>Unmaking of Market Place</i>	-	3
<i>Unallocated</i>	44	39
<i>Christmas Cards</i>	99	320
<i>Durham Cathedral Architecture</i>	1,171	1,489
<i>Durham in Poetry</i>	98	64
	<u>1,701</u>	<u>1,936</u>
Investment Income		
CAF account interest	1	1
Virgin money account interest	96	149
	<u>97</u>	<u>150</u>
Total incoming resources	<u><u>7,676</u></u>	<u><u>10,548</u></u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs		
Purchases	-	3,761
Price lists	38	48
Christmas cards	-	383
Sales commission	-	2
	<u>38</u>	<u>4,194</u>
Charitable activities		
County Durham Plan	3,600	895
Plaques for Annual Award	200	400
Subscriptions and grants to other organisations	196	196
Insurance	341	282
Postage, stationary and secretarial	1,297	957
	<u>5,633</u>	<u>2,730</u>
Management		
Meeting expenses	675	642
Agendas, bulletins, etc	256	626
Total	<u>931</u>	<u>1,268</u>
Governance costs		
Filing fee (Companies House)	13	13
Independent examiner's remuneration	200	186
Total	<u>213</u>	<u>199</u>
Total resources expended	<u><u>6,815</u></u>	<u><u>8,391</u></u>
Net income (expenditure)	<u>861</u>	<u>2,157</u>

This statement does not form part of the statutory accounts

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The completion of the 2016 statutory accounts was unavoidably delayed this year, partly because of a requirement to reformat them to ensure compliance with the latest accounting standard. Consequently they were not available for printing within this year's annual report in time for issue before the Annual General Meeting. Instead, the non-statutory statement of financial activities has been included for members' information on the final page of this report. This statement was approved by Trustees on 21 February 2017, but may be subject to minor alterations in the light of any final accountancy adjustments.

The statutory accounts will be available at the AGM, and members wishing to examine the full accounts before the meeting will be able to access them through the Trust's website at www.durhamcity.org.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The seventy- fourth Annual General Meeting of the City of Durham Trust will be held in Room 141, Elvet Riverside 1, New Elvet at 7.15 pm on Wednesday 10th May 2017
Members and friends are cordially invited to attend.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the 74th Annual General Meeting (Wednesday 11th May 2016).
3. Matters arising from the Minutes.
4. Report of the Trustees and the Presentation of Accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 December 2016.
5. Appointment of the honorary officers of the Trust.
6. Appointment of Trustees.

The following Trustees retire by rotation. All are eligible for re-election.

Professor. T.J.A. Clark, Mr. D.H. Jones, Mr. C. Jubb and Dr. D.C.D. Pocock

It is intended to nominate Mr. J.J. Lowe as a Trustee

Names of other possible new Trustees, together with proposer and seconder, and up to 100 words of recommendation, should reach the Secretary before the meeting.

7. Chairman's remarks.
8. Any other business which may be brought forward by members.

It would be helpful if notice of this could be given to the Secretary.

At 8 pm, after the AGM

**Roger Cornwell
will give a lecture on**

**“The Durham City Neighbourhood Plan:
A Progress Report”**